

CLUB NOTES

Official Organ of State Federation of Clubs

Maxwell Dixon, the California artist who is sketching in Arizona at present, contributed to the Woman's club program Tuesday with a paper on "Art at the Panama Pacific International Exposition." Mr. Dixon has taken a most kindly interest in the work attempted by the art department of the club and has frequently accompanied the working class on sketching trips. His suggestions and criticisms have been invaluable to the members.

Mr. Dixon is among the prominent painters whose works are on exhibition in San Francisco. He has won an enviable reputation both on the California coast and in the east and a world on art from one considered a clever artist by world famous critics will be of more than ordinary interest. Mr. Dixon's article read by Mrs. Dwight B. Heard at the Woman's club follows:

THE ARTIST OF THE P. P. I. E.

Very wisely Mrs. Alexander has headed me off from the subject every artist loves to read about: What is Art? and Why is Art?—and put it up to me to say which is Art at the P. P. I. E. And for an obscure painter this seems some hold underrating.

However if you are going to San Francisco for the Exposition and are determined to look for artistic rather than commercial or economic values let me begin in my naturally left handed way on the wrong side of the question and work through to the right.

To start with, and to make this dissertation as intelligible as possible, what you will see here, or anywhere, will depend mainly upon your own powers of perception and your willingness to forget for the time being certain pre-held notions that have become dear to you by inheritance and hard usage.

Speaking now, briefly, from the artist's point of view, all that mass of architecture and sculpture—its situation, color, arrangement, spacing and proportion—all were designed for one purpose: To make a certain impression upon you.

Therefore, when you look not at the object but behold the aspect of the object, be receptive, not analytical; let your subconscious self, whose judgments are always true, receive the impression.

This is important, for holding to this premise you are lifted out of the mere rubber-neck class and become a beholder—one who really sees. So continue left handedly, let us enter the Exposition by the Joy Zone. If you can stand this riotous color you surely will be good for the rest. For here, even in confusion, is a certain kaleidoscopic kind of harmony the sombre hue of the crowd flowing at the base of the human concessions blends it all together into a well ordered pattern.

To get this impression look at it not in detail but as an entire scene—for I you were stoned (which you may wish you were) that hysteria of color and design would tell the whole story. And speaking of stoning, the postmodern dances of the Samanas and the playing of the Mexican orchestra in the "Tehuantepec" are, to me, Art, because they make their impression on you direct, simply and without self-consciousness.

Now for the great endeavor. Going westward from the Joy Zone to the main Exposition buildings, beside them along the North Gardens or through the imposing courts that separate them, ask yourself, (if you must be analytical) what they mean to you, order, synthesis, power and a certain vague uplifting of the spirit that is part joy, part beauty—or rather merely behold, basking in argument from your mind, and afterward observe what spirit, what aura of color, has been impressed upon your consciousness.

The color scheme of the Exposition is consistently designed and carried out by Jules Guerin, is intended to be expressive of the West and its aspirations as well as to harmonize with local surroundings. This is perhaps the chief reason for the cheerful impression the whole makes upon the observer. (Point two) "Where color is the heart beats."

As to buildings individually, for my own part Machinery Hall is one of the finest, most imposing and satisfying for its simplicity and the large sense of unity and power it conveys.

At the west and opposite end and separated from the rest of its lagoon, the Fine Arts building, makes a palatial impression. Its lines are long and classic, almost majestic—a fine mass against an evening sky, and truly

poetic above its gentle reflection in the water. But to my own taste it is considerably marred by its ornament which does not somehow seem to be an integral and necessary part of the building itself, but to have been pasted on (rather clumsily, too) as an afterthought. This gives it a touch of cheapness which its lines and purpose do not deserve. So, again, in this case do not analyze, but get the general aspect of this building as a systematic mass; its color, its repose, its relation to its space and setting, and you will get a sense of art and of the thing that will outlast man's dull days.

Just opposite, to my eye, is the much-vaunted "Tower of Jewels." Although the lines are graceful and the color pleasing somehow it does not seem to justify its existence. To be sure it glitters, (come) but so does a circus wagon, and there is something about it irresistibly reminding of a Swiss wedding cake. "It's pretty, but is it Art?" Don't be deceived—it is only an astonishment.

Then there is something inspiring and justly, in the grand lines of the Court of the Universe. The sweep of the colonnade, and the two massive arches suggesting Rome, to the east and west, surmounted by Calder's two colossal groups, Nations of the east and Nations of the west. Some lack a sense of fitness in the designers allowed the monotonous and superfluous repetition of the "Star Figure" above the colonnade and the four little misplaced obelisks upon the arches to mar what otherwise would have been the unbroken sweep of free line reaching to and culminating in these two great groups of sculpture which interpret the meaning of this court.

The titles of these well enough explain them, but the fact that they are more interesting in detail than in mass is perhaps to be counted against them. But I suspect they give a certain sense of grandeur and are more collections of related figures than individual monuments. They are best seen from a three-quarter angle in brilliant sunlight against a deep sky, looking sharply upward, or in silhouette against a sunset.

The four colossal figures of the Elements by Robert Allen in the summer Court, though somewhat bombastic in conception, are interestingly worked out; but they best suggest the mystery of the forces which they symbolize when seen in the twilight. Then the great column of Progress to the north of these, overlooking the North Gardens and the West, surmounted by the minutely carved group called "The Adventurous Archer," by Herman A. McNeill, simple, complete and powerful. There are many objections made to this from base to point, but for its very simplicity it is one of the most consistent and satisfying of all such monuments in the grounds. See this late in the afternoon, looking a little south of west, when nearly all the side toward you is in strong shadow, offset with an outline of golden light; or on a hazy morning looking east when the Adventurous one with his radiant bow aiming across your left shoulder out of the Golden Gate toward the mysterious distant towers dreamlike through a luminous veil, the heights of the city. Here again the suggestion; and you will carry away an impression of an unmeasured outreaching tower.

Best of all is the Court of Abundance designed by L. C. Mullgardt. I don't know what style or order of architecture it is—I don't want to know and I don't care, for it is the most complete and harmonious piece of design to be seen in the Exposition; simple in line and arrangement, yet rich in ornament without a single superfluous. I only know that it satisfies me completely—that with its myriad pinpoints pointed toward heaven it inspires me, that with its quiet and strong proportions it gives me repose.

Larger in this court late of a sunny afternoon; watch the square fill with shooting shadow creeping up the eastern walls, leaving the Tower standing in orange in golden light. Watch this turn to orange, to red, to rose, to fawn, and as the twilight deepens the sky turns to a rich prussian blue behind it. Always that Tower aspires. Then be patient a little. Forget your supper and watch the lights come on. The subdued glow below, the keener yellow and white above, and the Tower seems to rise like a living ethereal thing against unknown night. This is not artifice, it is art.

This transformation of light is true of all these Courts and buildings, glorifying even the most commonplace. It is worth looking for wherever the hour before sunset happens to find you—for that is when Guerin's color scheme registers its full score.

Now as to lights, the more obvious (or not too obvious) effects of search lights playing upon certain domes and towers need scarcely be mentioned, for like the sign with the pointing finger you cannot escape them; but the beam of light, rather than the light itself, is direct lighting that makes the night facades glow mysteriously against the night, some angle of the Court or group of columns that catch a random shaft of light; part of a statue cut with electric sharpness upon the dark, the rest vague in shadow; or the long rows of lamps in colonnades or cloisters—all these seem from out of the night viewpoints give you the real sense of dimension. Most particularly let me mention the Fine Arts building. Set somewhat apart from the other buildings, the rays which reach it across the lagoon are more subdued and harmonious than elsewhere, and its detail being thus simplified and lost in the general mass, it is very impressive. Follow around the lagoon under its colonnade and note those huge columns loom ghostlike out of darkness with their quivering reflections in the pool. You will imagine you are in an-

other and more ancient world where buildings are made more for beauty than for gain. . . . And don't forget to look back upon the grounds from almost any of the nearby hills. From there the flashing searchlights, the glow of spacious walls, the shimmer of fountains, and the diamond-flashing of thousands of incandescents along the Zone make a dazzle that seems like some unexpected fairyland.

Also Pictures
On the Zone you will see a small concession, "The Art of the Future." By listening to the Barker you can learn that Stella is not some mysterious astrologer, nor a trained elephant, but a most marvelous painter. In fact so marvelous he tells you, that you cannot make quite sure whether you are looking at a picture or at a living model (they all adore that) who has disclosed your innermost self. Also most marvelous is one hundred thousand dollars. That proves it must be great. You get that? It is because it is just like nature and cost one hundred thousand—both impossibilities.

Now let's go look at the paintings, remembering at least for the time being that most painters are entirely forsaken external visible nature and seek to paint only the inner meaning or emotion of things—a purely psychological proposition which leaves the artist free to paint and the beholder to think, exactly what he pleases.

The most modern, and to me the most satisfactory part of the whole exhibition is the searchlight section. Note first how this exhibit is arranged and hung, with walls and furniture properly and consistently covered to make a fit background for the pictures. On entering you will see what appears to be decorative landscapes painted in the traditional method, and so they are, but not pictures. They are designs for tapestry, examples of which are hung with them. Beautiful iridescent colors in these.

In the main gallery of this section three large canvases of sea-birds by Lideners will hold your attention. These were meant for a larger room than this, but in this show, the treatment being too broad for this space. Though there may be many things in these pictures that you do not like there is also much that is worth your time and study. Note the effect of passing light and spray, air and movement, produced by the large separated brush strokes, and the fine of automatic color about the birds' wings, giving the impression of light—a dazzling object passing quickly across your vision. If you are fond of children you will particularly like the room devoted to the water color drawings and etchings of Carl Larsen. The beautiful clear outline and delicate color of these seem exactly to interpret a child's way of seeing things, appropriate and so unusual in illustrations for children's books. This pure quality of line is most noticeable in some of the etchings, particularly in a drawing of a child's head and an illustration of a fairy tale, a little princess in a cow horn interviewing a calf. So the expression of this calm, low, wonderfully rendered in a few lines.

The end wall of another gallery is devoted to drawings by John Bauer, also illustrating fairy tales. These too are exquisite in quality, both of treatment and imagination. Although full of detail they suggest rather than show. You get a strange, profoundly the quiet, humorous, mysterious quality of these dim legends of the Norse people. In another room are two long panels of decorative landscapes that though dull in color are suffused with a wonderful glow of evening splendor. These are truly poetic. Unfortunately I cannot recall the artist's name, but you can't miss them. Best of all are the truly Norse landscapes of Anna Boberg. I remember a portrait of her, sketching, by Anders Zorn; a giant of a woman, hooded, muffled in a huge white ulster, wearing great woolen mits, with her seal set up in the bank snow of a northern winter. A rather convincing record. The first thing you will think when you look at her picture is that you never saw anything like them; but on the second look they will not seem strange and if you are open to conviction they will convince you that there is a great free hearted interpretation of nature seen in all the canvases by Carl Larsson. Unfortunately, although the details of the program have not been arranged, the date has been set for May 5 and it is understood that the entertainment will be informal and amusing. At the club meeting on Wednesday, Mrs. Henry Cate of the Arizona School of Music, gave a most interesting paper on "Music." She discussed music in education and the old idea of musicians new to educators that the public schools and colleges give the student credit for music whether it be taught by the schools or by the institutions or individuals. Miss Alice Redwell the only honorary member of the club was present at the meeting.

The regular sewing meeting of the Neighborhood club of the South Side was held Wednesday afternoon. The members are preparing for an open sale to be held on Tuesday, at Neighborhood House in connection with a twenty-five cent chicken dinner, which will be served from 6 o'clock through the evening. The proceeds of the affair will be used for the building fund.

Mrs. Frank J. Jack was elected president of the Glendale Parent-Teacher Association at a recent meeting of the circle. Serving on the executive board with Mrs. Jack the ensuing year will be Mrs. G. A. White, vice president Mrs. Ira A. Moore, secretary and Prof. McKee, treasurer. Mrs. Edith Jaeger will act as chairman of the press committee.

Mrs. Henry D. Ross, president of the state federation was the guest of honor at an all day meeting of the Washington Woman's club at the home of Mrs. B. F. Brown. Mrs. Ross presented plans for a president's traveling fund that had been endorsed by the federation and which has since received the

though their work is direct and true, are somewhat lacking in power of suggestion. All the foregoing are in the National and International divisions. Of the foreign sections there is little I can say, as at the time I saw the exhibition, France, Austria, Italy, Spain, England, Belgium, Norway and Russia were not represented. Exhibits from the first four have since arrived the Norwegian collection is on the way. There is a room of German pictures, rowed, among which a large canvas painted very freely in pure color, if I don't remember the artist's name and a life size oil door portrait in grays by Leo Putz are to be particularly noted. There is also one of Franz von Stuck's fantasies which is typical of a certain phase of recent German work, though not of the very modern school. The canvas of Putz, one of the direct colorists of the young German is by all odds superior to anything of its kind in the exhibition. Its technical skill and simplicity are astounding, its color and drawing subtle and sure, a combination of strength and delicacy that are dazzling. Look at this canvas from a distance, that is, look into it—then go up close and see how it is painted. You will not forget it.

Or ultra-moderns, cubists, post-impressionists, futurists, orphists, etc., there is no use to speak, as there were no adequate examples in the exhibition when I saw it. There should be some with the French and Italian exhibits. If so, remember in looking at them that these painters are entirely forsaken external visible nature and seek to paint only the inner meaning or emotion of things—a purely psychological proposition which leaves the artist free to paint and the beholder to think, exactly what he pleases.

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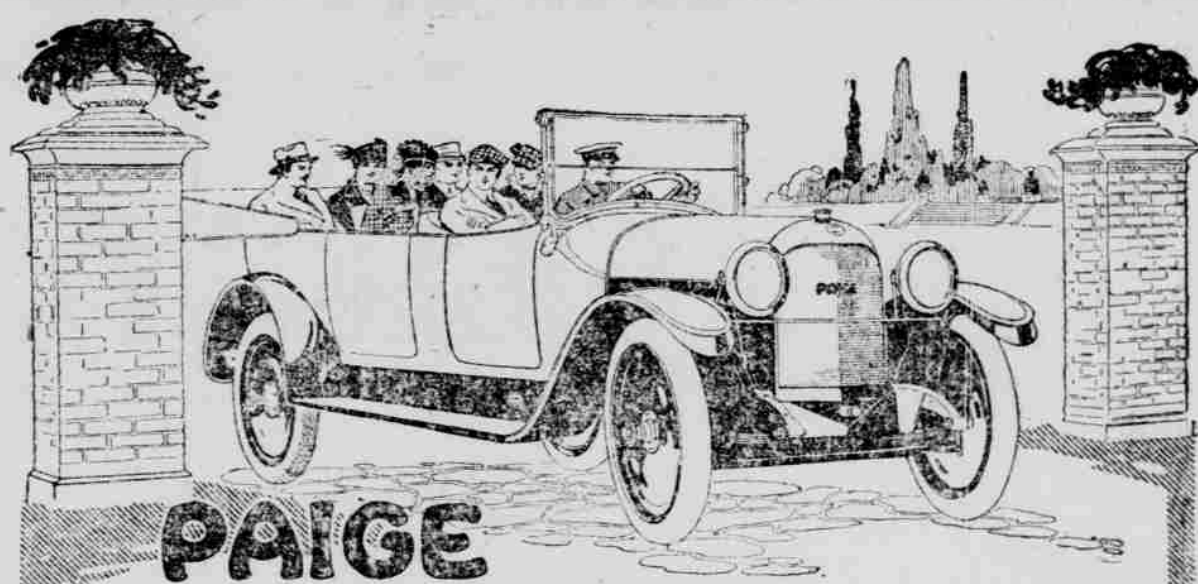
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Mrs. Honore Willis.

Mrs. Honore Willis, the young Iowa authoress who writes of the west, has just published her second novel, "Still Jim." Her first book, "The Heart of the Desert," was well received. Mrs. Willis is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, has written much for the magazines, and is now managing editor of The Des Moines Register.

WEDDING

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